



Visteon Global Technologies, Inc.
% Dummett Copp
25 The Square
Martlesham Heath
IPSWICH
IP5 3SL

The Patent Office
Patents Directorate

Concept House
Cardiff Road, Newport
South Wales NP10 8QQ

Examiner: 01633 813790
†E-mail: katie.allen@patent.gov.uk
Switchboard: 01633 814000
Fax: 01633 814444
Minicom: 08459 222250
DX 722540/41 Cleppa Park 3
<http://www.patent.gov.uk>

Your Reference: P3920.P4/AMTB
Application No: GB 0308499.3

11 September 2003

Dear Sirs

Patents Act 1977:
Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 and 18(3)

Latest date for reply: 1 June 2004

I enclose two copies of my search and examination report and two copies of the citations.

By the above date you should either file amendments to meet the objections in the report or make observations on them. If you do not, the application may be refused.

Publication

I estimate that, provided you have met all the formal requirements, preparations for publication of your application will be completed soon after **21 October 2003**. At this time you will receive a letter confirming the exact date when the preparations for publication will be completed. This letter will also tell you the publication number and date of publication of your application.

Withdrawal/amendment

If you wish to withdraw your application before it is published you must do so before the preparations for publication are complete. **WARNING** - after preparations for publication are complete it will NOT be possible to withdraw your application from publication.

[†]Use of E-mail: Please note that e-mail should be used for correspondence only.



If you wish to file amended claims for inclusion with the published application you must do so before the preparations for publication are completed. If you write to the Office less than 3 weeks before 21 October 2003 please mark your letter prominently:

"URGENT - PUBLICATION IMMINENT".

Yours faithfully

Catherine Allen
Examiner

Important information about combined search and examination

I also ask that you take note of the following points. These might have a bearing on the future stages of your application because the examination report has been sent to you before your application has been published.

- (a) You may file voluntary amendments before making a full response to my examination report. We will publish with your application any new or amended claims you file voluntarily or as a full response, provided that they are received before preparations for publication are completed. It would help us when you file amendments before publication if you could prominently indicate in a covering letter whether or not the amendments are intended as a full response to the examination report.
- (b) If you file a full response to the examination report before your application is published I will consider it as soon as possible. However, if this would disrupt the publication of your application, I would have to delay taking any action until the application had been published. This delay could be up to 3 months, depending upon when we receive your response.
- (c) There is another situation when there might be a delay between you filing a full response and the Patent Office responding to it. This would arise if you met all my objections but your application had not or had only recently been published. I could not report the outcome of my re-examination until I was satisfied that the search was complete for documents published before the priority date of your invention and that anybody interested in the application has had three months following publication of the application to make observations on the patentability of your invention.
- (d) Provided that the requirements of the Act have been met, I can send your application to grant as early as three months after publication. Before doing so I will bring the original search up to date and raise with you any further objection that might result from this top-up search. However, there is a possibility that at that time I may not have access to all the patent applications published after the priority date of your invention and of possible relevance to your application. If this is the case I would have to complete the search after grant and if necessary raise any new found novelty objection then.



Application No: GB 0308499.3
Claims searched: 1 to 22

Examiner: Catherine Allen
Date of search: 10 September 2003

Patents Act 1977 : Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance	
X	14, 17	JP11257122	HONDA MOTOR CO LTD
X	14, 17	JP11030139	HITACHI LTD
X	14, 17	JP63248936	PLUS:KK
X	14, 17	JP2002031023	MIKUNI CORP
X	14, 17	US2002163197	AVKERMANN et al
A	-	GB2368664	FORD GLOBAL TECH INC

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC⁶:

F1K

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC⁷:

F02N, B60K

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report :

Online: EPODOC, JAPIO, WPI



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Novelty

1. The invention as defined in claims 14, 17 is not new because it has already been disclosed in each of the following documents:

- a) JP11257122, see abstract;
- b) JP11030139, see abstract;
- c) JP63248936, see abstract;
- d) JP2002031023, see abstract;
- e) US2002163197.

2. Each of these documents discloses a method of starting a vehicle where various vehicle systems are linked to the starter motor. These systems are checked prior to the engagement of the starter motor with the vehicle engine via the clutch, as the vehicle is started. Note that these are merely examples of documents anticipating claims 14 & 17.

Clarity, Consistency and Support

3. Statements of invention on pages 2 and 3 of your description are not entirely consistent with independent claims 1 and 14.